



St. Declan's Way - 7 Day Irish Camino

Camino | Pilgrim paths | Scenic trails | Celtic story & song |
Ancient castles | Reflective 'compass points' along the way |
Where old meets now!

The 100 km (62 mile) ancient path of St. Declan's Way is very much a journey back in time linking the ancient ecclesiastical centres of Ardmore in County Waterford and Cashel in County Tipperary.

St. Declan brought Christianity to the Déise region of Waterford around 415AD shortly before the arrival of St. Patrick to Ireland. St. Patrick did not come further south than Cashel in his mission to bring the Christian story to the people of Ireland. St. Declan left Ardmore in Waterford and made the return journey to Cashel to meet St. Patrick on many occasions and so the pilgrim route was born.

St. Declan's Way remains faithful to the medieval pilgrimage and trading routes etched out on the landscape through the centuries. Following these ancient trails with Dr. Phil and Elaine will leave imprints that will last a lifetime. On our Camino, we quite literally walk in the steps of those who have gone before. When our own stories merge with the stories of old, it is then the magic happens.

Let the journey begin!



Day 1: Waterford – home of the Camino

Aim to arrive at the Edmund Rice Centre, Barrack Street, Waterford (X91KH90) for 1pm. Cars will be parked here in safety for the duration of the week and your luggage will be transferred to the Tower Hotel. Local historian Donnchadh O' Ceallachain will bring you on a bespoke tour of the Viking Triangle and Waterford Treasures Museum. We will enjoy a 'Welcoming Reception' of a light lunch with story and song in the 13th Century Choristers' Hall. Time to relax before dinner at 7pm in the Tower Hotel.



Day 2: Cashel to Cahir (17.2 kms or 10.7 miles)



Departure for Cashel at 7.45am. We will have time for a brief visit to the Rock of Cashel before the start of our first day's Camino. The 'city of kings' was home to the high kings of Munster who ruled for centuries from the magnificent site of the Rock of Cashel. It was also from here that St. Declan left on his return to Ardmore after his many meetings with St. Patrick in the 5th Century. You sense the history as you leave behind this iconic pilgrim space to make your first steps en route to Ardmore.



Arrival in Cahir at approximately 4.30pm where the Cahir House Hotel will be our base for the next 2 nights. Your luggage will be waiting for you in your room. Time for you to stroll around this historic town or simply to relax in your room before evening dinner at 7pm.

Day 3: Cahir to Goatenbridge (20 kms or 12.4 miles)

We leave the Hotel at 8.30am for our second day of the Camino. We will return to Cahir at approximately 2pm. Afternoon, time to do as you wish. Explore the historic Cahir Castle, maybe a kayaking trip on the River Suir or discover the Swiss cottage. Even enjoy a fresh creamy pint of Guinness to mark the occasion. We gather for evening dinner at 7pm.

Local guides will join us from 'Knockmealdown Active', Kevin O' Donnell and Mark Rylands, over these few days from Cahir to Lismore who have been promoting St. Declan's Way for decades. Whilst sharing the path with them, their stories will help us to connect fully with all who have passed this way before.



Day 4: Goatenbridge to Lismore (26.8 kms or 16.7 miles)

This is our longest trail on the Camino so we will set off just before 8am. The first half hour of this walk is the most challenging as we cross over the Knockmealdown Mountains at 'Bottleneck Pass' at an elevation of 537 metres. Apart from this stretch, this day's trail passes through undulating but beautifully picturesque terrain as we make our way onto Mount Melleray and then on into Lismore by 4pm.

Alice O' Donoghue from the Lismore Heritage Centre will join us for the last few kilometres as we descend the hill into Lismore. There is no one quite like Alice to bring the story of this historic town to life. We'll have time for a short visit to the Lismore Heritage Centre before returning to Mount Melleray which will be our base for the next 2 nights (Or the option of Kilmaneen Farmhouse). Your luggage will be in your en suite guest room and we will have dinner in the monastery at 7pm.

Mount Melleray Abbey, near Cappoquin is one of the major milestones along St. Declan's way, although of course it was not there in Declan's time. The monastery has been home to a community of Cistercian (or Trappist) monks for nearly 200 years. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Irish men who wished to become Cistercian monks travelled to the continent.



In France in 1830, following a revolution, English and Irish monks were expelled from the Abbey of Melleray, in Brittany, and they travelled to Ireland seeking a new home. They established Mount Melleray near to Cappoquin and the foundation stone was laid on the feast of St Bernard in 1833.

During our time in Mount Melleray, we will be staying in the en-suite guest rooms and we have the option of attending morning and evening prayer.

Day 5: Lismore to Aglish (18.6 kms or 11.6 miles)



We'll follow the flow of the River Blackwater as it leads us gently on towards Cappoquin, on into Villierstown before our descent into Aglish. Return to Lismore mid afternoon for dinner before our coach transfer out to Mount Melleray for the evening.

Day 6: Aglish to Ardmore (19.6 kms or 12.2 miles)



Our final day's Camino leads us over beautiful undulating vales and hills to where the sea gradually opens up before us as we arrive into Ardmore. We gather at St. Declan's Well to mark the moment. That evening we will have a celebratory meal together in The Round Tower Hotel, Ardmore.



St. Declan's Way Camino Passport

At the end of Day 6 your very own St. Declan's Way Camino Passport will be stamped and presented to you. You will feel a sense of achievement of having walked the 100 kms (62 miles) all the way from Cashel to Ardmore as St. Declan himself did over 1,600 years ago. We will wrap up the evening with a few tunes and a wee drink or two.

There is no doubt we'll have earned it!

Day 7: St. Declan's Well



Time for a short 3 km (1.9 mile) cliff walk from St. Declan's Well and on to the Round Tower before breakfast. Coach transfer at 11am to the Edmund Rice Chapel, Waterford City to collect our cars.

Our Waterford Camino is about connecting to something deeper within ourselves.

Included in your St. Declan's Way - 7 Day Irish Camino...

- 6 nights bed and breakfast, 6 evening dinners and daily packed lunches for your Camino.
- Reflective 'compass points' each day led by Dr. Phil and Elaine Brennan.
- Handpicked personal guides over the 7 days to include Br. Phil Ryan, Kevin O' Donnell and Mark Rylands from Knockmealdown Active and Alice O' Donoghue from Lismore Heritage Centre.
- Welcoming Reception & Orientation in the Waterford's Medieval Museum.
- Private guided tours of Waterford's award winning Viking Triangle, Medieval Museum & Lismore Heritage Town.
- Coach transfers, luggage transfer, room allocation for the 6 nights.
- Car parking in the Edmund Rice Centre for the duration of your Camino.
- St. Declan's Way Camino Passport and completion stamp on your final full day with us.

